

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 8, 2021

The Honorable R.D. James  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works  
Department of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

The Honorable Russell T. Vought  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Assistant Secretary James and Director Vought:

We write to request that you strongly consider the Morganza to the Gulf (MTG) project as a New Start funding priority for the Fiscal Year 2021 Work Plan. This authorized flood control project protects a region which is critical to supporting our nation's energy security infrastructure in the Gulf, a major administration priority.

Though no federal funds have yet been appropriated for MTG, the non-Federal sponsor has already begun to construct features along the project's authorized alignment. Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes have supported these efforts through local taxes which, to date, have resulted in more than half a billion dollars in local funds invested to support MTG's construction as of this writing.

As you are aware from past visits to South Louisiana, our coastal areas are regularly in the path of hurricanes and tropical storms, with five named storms impacting our state in 2020 alone. Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes weathered these impacts well, considering the significant flood protection investments already made to the Morganza project by these non-federal sponsors. However, it is a sobering fact that had smaller storms such as 2019's Tropical Storm Barry, gained strength to become a hurricane, the impacts to areas within the MTG alignment and, subsequently, our nation's energy infrastructure, would have been dramatic. We know in Louisiana: it's only a matter of time before this scenario becomes a reality.

This year for the first time, Congress explicitly directed in P.L. 116-260 that projects eligible for new start designation shall include projects funded through the Mississippi River & Tributaries (MR&T) account. As you know, Morganza is the *only* project eligible for new start in MR&T – a clear direction from Congress that continues the bipartisan and bicameral support for the project, as we saw with its 2007 authorization and 2014 reauthorization.

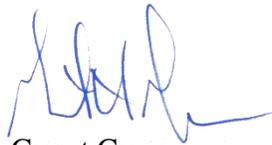
Most recently, the project underwent a comprehensive Adaptive Criteria Assessment Report (ACAR), a process which recommended a project delivery approach that, conservatively, lowers the

price tag of the project by \$5-\$6 billion, therefore reducing project cost by more than half of its 2014 authorized amount; while delivering a project which substantially reduces flood risk to this region. MTG's construction will also result in immediate savings to the National Flood Insurance Program, which pays out millions of dollars in claims annually to residents in Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes.

Infrastructure projects which are innovative, locally driven, and locally funded have been hallmarks of this administration's policies, and MTG is a shining example of these values. Considering the quality and strength of the infrastructure investments made by local stakeholders, we also believe that MTG may be an ideal candidate for the 1043 non-federal implementation pilot program, saving the federal government even more in expenditures.

Mr. Secretary, in your response to the results of the ACAR in a December 13, 2019 memorandum, you noted that the new delivery approach presented by ACAR, "is aligned with the Administration's commitment to infrastructure in America while also minimizing residual risk associated with this important project...". We ask that you fulfill the federal promise of this innovative project with a new start designation and funding so that our communities can obtain higher quality infrastructure before the next storms hits.

Sincerely,



Garret Graves  
Member of Congress



Steve Scalise  
Member of Congress